Epstein Threatened To Reveal Gates' Alleged Affair With Russian Bridge Player: Report

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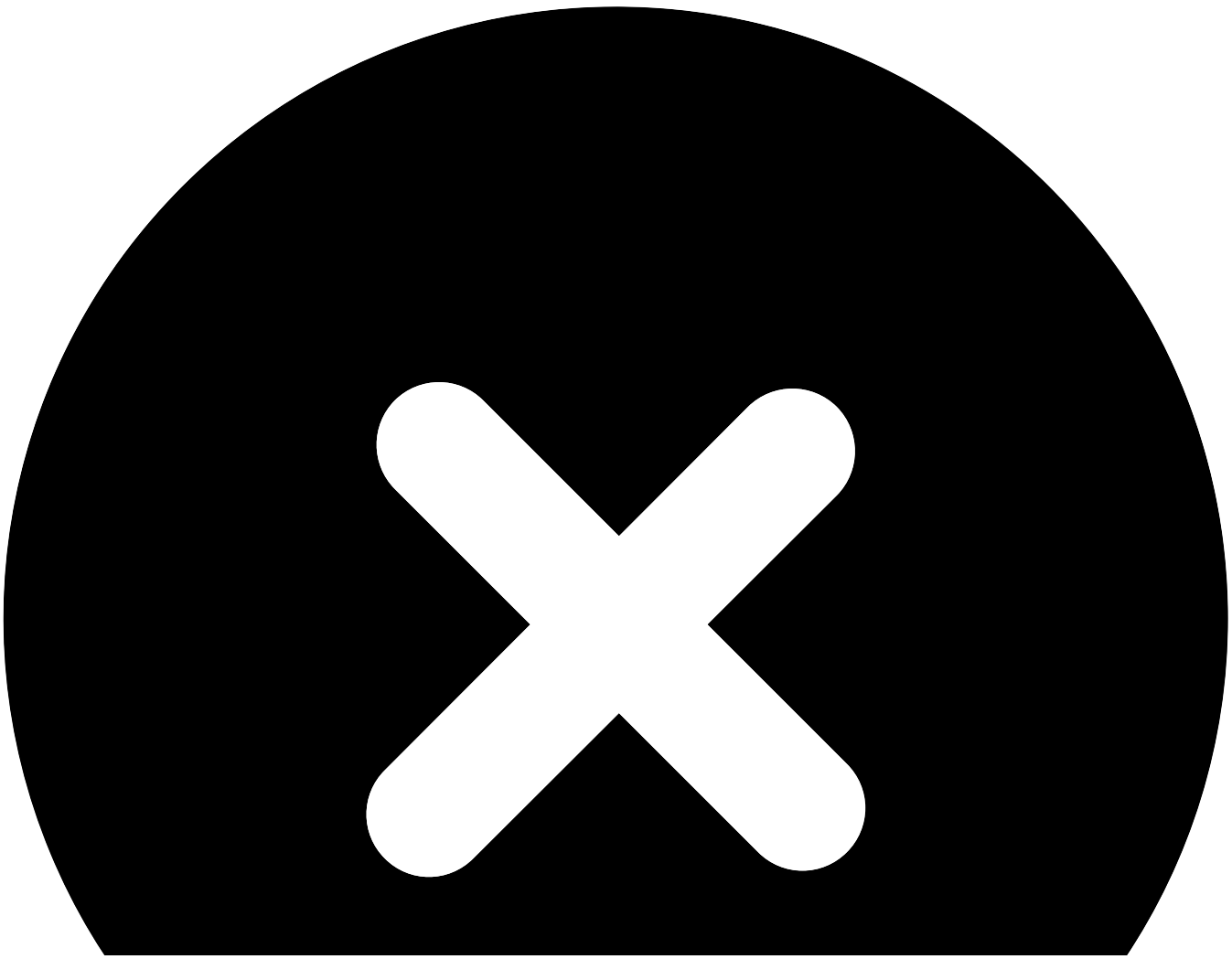
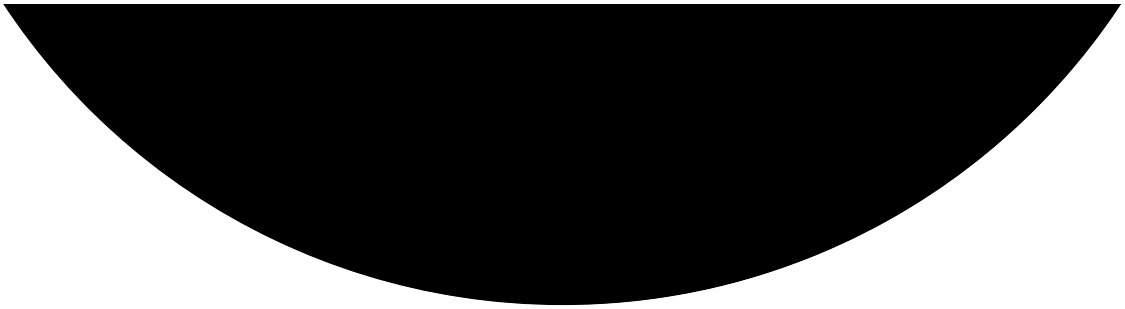
OPINION: This article may contain commentary which reflects the author's opinion.

Another chapter in the ongoing saga involving the disgraceful life of late financier Jeffrey Epstein played out in a news report over the weekend.

According to sources who spoke to The Wall Street Journal, Epstein appeared to threaten Bill Gates after discovering that the co-founder of Microsoft had an affair with a Russian bridge player while he was married to Melinda Gates.





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Around 2010, the Microsoft co-founder encountered the woman when she was in her 20s. Subsequently, Epstein crossed paths with her in 2013 and went on to pay for her attendance at a software coding school. People familiar with the matter state that in 2017, Epstein emailed Gates requesting reimbursement for the expenses incurred during the course, the outlet reported.

Following unsuccessful attempts by the convicted sex offender to convince Gates to join a multibillion-dollar charitable fund alongside JPMorgan Chase, the email in question was sent, the Journal noted. People who have seen it suggest that its underlying implication was that Epstein might disclose their relationship if Gates did not maintain a connection between the two of them.

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"Mr. Gates met with Epstein solely for philanthropic purposes. Having failed repeatedly to draw Mr. Gates beyond these matters, Epstein tried unsuccessfully to leverage a past relationship to threaten Mr. Gates," said a spokeswoman for the onetime Microsoft boss.

In 2006, Epstein faced accusations of sexually abusing underage girls, some as young as 14. In 2008, he pleaded guilty to charges of soliciting and procuring a minor for prostitution. Following his conviction, Epstein served time in a Florida jail and was required to register as a sex offender, the WSJ noted.

In 2019, after the Miami Herald published an exposé featuring numerous women who claimed they had been victimized by Epstein, he was arrested on charges related to sex trafficking. While awaiting trial, Epstein died in jail later that year, with the medical examiner determining the cause of death as suicide, the outlet added.

"Gates, 67 years old, a technology adviser to Microsoft and one of its largest shareholders, has said he met Epstein a few times only to discuss philanthropy, which he regrets and calls a mistake," the outlet said.

Mila Antonova, the Russian bridge player, chose not to provide any comment regarding Gates and further stated that she was unaware of Epstein's identity at the time of their meeting.

"I had no idea that he was a criminal or had any ulterior motive," she said regarding Epstein, the WSJ reported. "I just thought he was a successful businessman and wanted to help. I am disgusted with Epstein and what he did."

According to his own account, Gates picked up playing bridge from his parents, and it eventually became one of his favored pastimes, said the report. He engaged in the game with Antonova, who also shared his passion for it. Antonova's LinkedIn profile indicates that she studied at a Russian university from 2000 to 2005, and went on to establish a bridge club in the United States. She later took on multiple positions as a software engineer in the Bay Area, the report said.

In a video posted online in 2010, she discussed meeting Gates at a bridge tournament and playing against him. "I didn't beat him, but I tried to kick him with my leg," she quipped in the video.

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According to documents, starting in 2011, Gates had over half a dozen scheduled meetings with Epstein. These meetings included dinners at Epstein's New York townhouse. Flight records indicate that Gates flew on Epstein's private plane from New Jersey to Florida in March 2013.

During that same month, Gates and Epstein met in France with an official from the Nobel Peace Prize committee. Additionally, the two spent a significant portion of a day together in New York City in September 2014, where they met with other billionaires, as reported by The Wall Street Journal separately.